

**b. Amendments to the Specification**

**Please delete the two paragraphs at page 2, lines 19 – 28.**

**Between page 2, line 29, and page 3, line 1, rewrite the paragraph as:**

5        One Another embodiment features a manufacture for a preform. The preform has a core, a cladding layer, and an overcladding layer. The core, cladding layer, and overcladding layer each include silica-glass. The preform has an OD variation of 0.1 percent or less at one longitudinal position along the length of the preform.

10      **On page 5, after line 4, insert the new paragraph:**

Some exemplary processes produce a glass overcladding tube from a silica gel body. Some such processes include passing the gel body through a hot zone under conditions that cause partial sintering of the gel body and repassing the gel body through the hot zone under conditions that further sinter the gel body into a glass overcladding tube. Other such processes include subjecting one end of a cylindrical silica gel body to a hot zone until the end is at least partially sintered. These processes also include vertically passing the gel body through the hot zone to sinter the gel body. The act of passing causes the partially sintered end to enter the hot zone last.

**At page 15, lines 2 – 5, replace the entire paragraph with the new paragraph:**

25      A manufacture for a preform has a core, a cladding layer, and an overcladding layer. The core, cladding layer, and overcladding layer each include silica-glass. The preform has an OD variation of 0.1 percent or less at one longitudinal position along the length of the preform.